Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LUSAKA 01894 291204Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
----------009572 291204Z /50
O 291008Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8510

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1894

NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PEPR, US SF
SUBJ: SOUTH AFRICAN EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE US PUBLIC OPINION

1. IN MAY 27 CONVERSATION (SEPTEL) BETWEEN AMBASSADOR MCHENRY AND ALLISTAIR SPARKS, EDITOR OF THE RAND DAILY MAIL, SPARKS SAID HIS NEWSPAPER WAS WORKING ON A SERIES OF MAJOR STORIES ON THE USE OF SECRET FUNDS IN PRO-SOUTH AFRICA PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES. HE DESCRIBED IT AS A SCANDAL OF MAJOR PROPORTIONS WHICH INCLUDED CORRUPT PRACTICES BY SAG OFFICIALS AND INVOLVED US CONGRESSMEN. SPARKS SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:
A. WITHIN TWO WEEKS, THE RAND DAILY MAIL WOULD EXPOSE THE "CLUB OF TEN," WHICH HAS BEEN PLACING ADVERTISEMENTS IN US NEWSPAPERS, AS BEING ENTIRELY FUNDED BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN INFORMATION SERVICE;
B. THE MAIL WAS WORKING ON A STORY EXPOSING PRO-SAG ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS AS BEING, IN FACT, GOVERNMENT OWNED;
C. THE MAIL WOULD REVEAL (UNSUCCESSFUL) EFFORTS BY THE SAG TO PURCHASE THE WASHINGTON STAR NEWSPAPER. SPARKS SAID THAT JIM GOFF, A MICHIGAN BUSINESSMAN, WAS THE FRONT;
D. A NUMBER OF US CONGRESSMEN RECEIVED MONEY INDIRECTLY FROM THE SAG.

2. SPARKS SAID THAT SOUTH AFRICAN LAWS MADE IT EXTREMELY CONFIDENTIAL

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DIFFICULT FOR THE RAND DAILY MAIL ALONE TO EXPOSE THE FULL STORY. MOREOVER, MUCH, IF NOT MOST, OF THE STORY WAS IN THE UNITED STATES. THEREFORE, SPARKS HAD WORKED OUT AN AGREEMENT WITH BEN BRADLEE OF THE WASHINGTON POST TO WORK TOGETHER ON THE STORY.
LOW

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